CLAIMS

1 1. A computer system comprising:

2   at least one processor;

3   a memory coupled to the at least one processor;

4   an execution data collection mechanism residing in the memory and executed by

5 the at least one processor, the execution data collection mechanism collecting execution

6 data for the computer system;

7   an execution data transmission mechanism residing in the memory and executed

8 by the at least one processor, the execution data transmission mechanism, when enabled,

9 transmitting at least a portion of the execution data to another computer system coupled

10 to the computer system via a network; and

11   an execution data access mechanism residing in the memory and executed by the

12 at least one processor, the execution data access mechanism allowing access to the

13 execution data by a user of the computer system only if the execution data transmission

14 mechanism is enabled.

1 2. The computer system of claim 1 wherein the computer system comprises a customer

2 computer system and the another computer system comprises a vendor computer system.

1 3. The computer system of claim 1 wherein the execution data comprises data collected

2 by an operating system residing in the memory and executed by the at least one processor.

1 4. The computer system of claim 1 wherein the execution data comprises data collected

2 by a software application residing in the memory and executed by the at least one

3 processor.

1   5. The computer system of claim 1 wherein the execution data comprises data collected

2   by an analysis program residing in the memory and executed by the at least one processor.

1   6. A networked computer system comprising:

2   (A) a first computer system;

3   (B) a second computer system coupled to the first computer system via a network,

4   the second computer system comprising:

5   (B1) an execution data collection mechanism that collects execution data

6   for the second computer system;

7   (B2) an execution data transmission mechanism that, when enabled,

8   transmits at least a portion of the execution data to the first computer system; and

9   (B3) an execution data access mechanism that allows access to the

10   execution data by a user of the second computer system only if the execution data

11   transmission mechanism is enabled.

1   7. The networked computer system of claim 6 wherein the first computer system

2   comprises a vendor computer system and the second computer system comprises a

3   customer computer system.

1   8. The networked computer system of claim 6 wherein the execution data comprises data

2   collected by an operating system.

1   9. The networked computer system of claim 6 wherein the execution data comprises data

2   collected by a software application.

1   10. The networked computer system of claim 6 wherein the execution data comprises

2   data collected by an analysis program.

1   11. A method for a user of a second computer system coupled via a network to a first

2   computer system to access execution data collected by the second computer system, the

3   method comprising the steps of:

4   (A) the second computer system collecting the execution data;

5   (B) the second computer system determining whether transmission of the

6   execution data from the second computer system to the first computer system is enabled;

7   (C) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer system to the

8   first computer system is enabled, allowing the user to access the execution data; and

9   (D) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer system to the

10   first computer system is not enabled, not allowing the user to access the execution data.

1   12. A method for a first computer system to collect execution data from a second

2   computer system coupled via a network to the first computer system, the method

3   comprising the steps of:

4   (A) the second computer system collecting the execution data;

5   (B) the second computer system determining whether transmission of the

6   execution data from the second computer system to the first computer system is enabled;

7   (C) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer system to the

8   first computer system is enabled, allowing access to the execution data by a user of the

9   second computer system;

10   (D) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer system to the

11   first computer system is not enabled, not allowing access to the execution data by a user

12   of the second computer system; and

13   (E) the second computer system transmitting at least a portion of the execution

14   data to the first computer system.

1   13. A method for a user of a second computer system coupled via a network to a first

2   computer system to access execution data collected by the second computer system, the

3   method comprising the steps of:

4   (A) the second computer system collecting the execution data;

5   (B) the second computer system allowing the user to access a limited portion of

6   the execution data;

7   (C) if the user requests to access more than the limited portion of the execution

8   data:

9   (C1) the second computer system determining whether transmission of the

10   execution data from the second computer system to the first computer system is

11   enabled;

12   (C2) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer

13   system to the first computer system is enabled, allowing the user to access the

14   requested execution data; and

15   (C3) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer

16   system to the first computer system is not enabled, not allowing the user to access

17   the requested execution data.

1 14. A method for a first computer system to collect execution data from a second

2 computer system coupled via a network to the first computer system, the method

3 comprising the steps of:

4   (A) the second computer system collecting the execution data;

5   (B) the second computer system allowing the user to access a limited portion of

6 the execution data;

7   (C) if the user requests to access more than the limited portion of the execution

8 data:

9   (C1) the second computer system determining whether transmission of the

10   execution data from the second computer system to the first computer system is

11   enabled;

12   (C2) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer

13   system to the first computer system is enabled, allowing access to the requested

14   execution data by a user of the second computer system;

15   (C3) if transmission of the execution data from the second computer

16   system to the first computer system is not enabled, not allowing access to the

17   requested execution data by a user of the second computer system; and

18   (C4) the second computer system transmitting at least a portion of the

19   execution data to the first computer system.

1   15. A method for doing business comprising the steps of:

2   (A) offering to a customer the ability to access execution data gathered by a

3   customer computer system in exchange for the customer's sharing of the execution data;

4   (B) if the customer does not accept the offer in (A), disabling customer access to

5   the execution data on the customer computer system;

6   (C) if the customer accepts the offer in (A), enabling customer access to the

7   execution data on the customer computer system.

1   16. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of:

2   (D) the customer computer system sharing the execution data.

1   17. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of:

2   selling the customer computer system to the customer.

1   18. A program product comprising:

2   (A) an execution data collection mechanism that collects execution data for a first

3   computer system;

4   (B) an execution data transmission mechanism that, when enabled, transmits at

5   least a portion of the execution data to a second computer system;

6   (C) an execution data access mechanism that allows access to the execution data

7   only if the execution data transmission mechanism is enabled; and

8   (D) computer-readable signal bearing media bearing (A), (B) and (C).

1   19. The program product of claim 18 wherein the signal bearing media comprises

2   recordable media.

1   20. The program product of claim 18 wherein the signal bearing media comprises

2   transmission media.

1   21. The program product of claim 18 wherein the execution data comprises data

2   collected by an operating system.

1   22. The program product of claim 18 wherein the execution data comprises data

2   collected by a software application.

1   23. The program product of claim 18 wherein the execution data comprises data

2   collected by an analysis program.

1 24. A program product comprising:

2   (A) an operating system comprising:

3   (A1) an execution data collection mechanism that collects execution data

4   for a first computer system;

5   (A2) an execution data transmission mechanism that, when enabled,

6   transmits at least a portion of the execution data to a second computer system;

7   (A3) an execution data access mechanism that allows access to the

8   execution data only if the execution data transmission mechanism is enabled; and

9   (B) computer-readable signal bearing media bearing the operating system.

1 25. The program product of claim 24 wherein the signal bearing media comprises

2 recordable media.

1 26. The program product of claim 24 wherein the signal bearing media comprises

2 transmission media.

1 27. The program product of claim 24 wherein the execution data comprises data

2 collected by an operating system.

1 28. The program product of claim 24 wherein the execution data comprises data

2 collected by a software application.

1 29. The program product of claim 24 wherein the execution data comprises data

2 collected by an analysis program.

*****